

Appendix 3 (as supplied by the authors): Characteristics of included Cochrane systematic reviews

| Review title | Date assessed as up to date | RA disease duration (number of studies) | Comparison interventions [number of studies] | Outcomes for which data were reported | Review limitations |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Abatacept for rheumatoid arthritis | 1 April 2009 | Established RA (4) Late RA (3) | Placebo [1] MTX (+ Placebo) [3] DMARD (+ placebo) [2] Etanercept (+ placebo) [1] | ACR20 ACR50 ACR70 DAS HAQ SF-36 Radiographic scores AE Serious AE Infections Malignancies Withdrawals Death | There was moderate quality of evidence for most outcomes because of limitations in study design (ITT analysis not performed, less than 80% risk of attrition bias). Few included studies and all data not available. |
| Adalimumab for rheumatoid arthritis | 9 February 2009 | Early RA (2) Established RA (3) Late RA (3) | Placebo [2] MTX (+ placebo) [5] DMARD (+ placebo) [1] | ACR20 ACR50 ACR70 Good EULAR response DAS HAQ Radiographic scores AE Serious AE Infections Malignancies | Limitations in study design include method of randomization not clearly described. Few included studies and sparse data with many different doses used resulting in heterogeneity. |

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| Anakinra for rheumatoid arthritis | 5 February 2008 | Established RA (3) Late RA (2) | Placebo [3] MTX (+ Placebo) [2] Etanercept & MTX (+ Placebo) [1] | Withdrawals ACR20 ACR50 ACR70 HAQ Radiographic scores AE Serious AE Infections Withdrawals Death | Limitations in study design include method of randomization not clearly described and ITT analysis not performed. Few included studies and sparse data with different doses. One included study used a different comparison resulting in heterogeneity. |
| Etanercept for rheumatoid arthritis | 25 June 2008 | Established RA (2) Late RA (3) | Placebo [1] MTX (+ placebo) [4] | ACR20 ACR50 ACR70 DAS HAQ SF-36 Radiographic scores Infections Malignancies Withdrawals Death | Limitations in study design include method of randomization not described, method of concealment not reported, blinding not done. Few included studies and all data not available. |
| Infliximab for rheumatoid arthritis | 17 March 2009 | Early RA (1) Established RA (3) | MTX (+ placebo) [4] | ACR20 ACR50 ACR70 DAS HAQ SF-36 Radiographic scores Serious AE | Limitations in study design not yet fully assessed. Very few included studies with different doses and not all data available. |

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| Rituximab for rheumatoid arthritis | 17 March 2009 | Late RA (3) | MTX (+ placebo) [3] | Infections Malignancies Withdrawals Death ACR50 ACR70 Good EULAR response DAS HAQ SF-36 Radiographic scores AE Serious AE Infections Withdrawals Death | Limitations in study design include method of randomization not described, method of concealment not reported, blinding not described. Few included studies and all data not available. |
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